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REMARKS

In accordance with the above amendments, claim 1 has been amended, claims 1-7, 10 and 13-15 remain under consideration in the present application, claims 8-9, 11-12 and 16 having been deemed withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected species/invention by the Examiner. No claim stands as having been allowed.

Claim Rejection Under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1-7 and 13-15 remain rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bustamante et al (USPN 3,778,217). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Bustamante et al reference discloses an extruding die for extruding an article having a multiplicity of ducts through its length. That device is of a multi-piece construction in the form of a stacked dual pin plate arrangement having a removable taper and two removable spiders, 2 and 3, which carry and define a plurality of pins for forming the ducts in the extruded article.

As previously explained, the design of Bustamante et al '217 clearly suffers from all the drawbacks of the prior art which the present invention seeks to overcome. It is important to note that the path required of the propellant (or the material being extruded) entering the region between the center pin and the six pins surrounding the center pin must flow from the exterior region surrounding those six pins inward towards the center pin

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as the central portion 8 of spider 2 is solid or closed(see the reference figures). This flow path creates a high potential for undesirable movement of the six pins that surround the center pin.

On the other hand, the extrusion die of the present invention enables propellant flow to be introduced into the region between the center pin and the six pins surrounding the center pin without the flow forces that cause pin deflection during extrusion operations. It should be kept in mind that the material is highly viscous and the forces required to accomplish extrusion are quite high.

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to state that flow generally parallel to the pin introduces propellant into the regions between all of the pins in the device of the present invention. This configuration is not taught or suggested by the reference. Furthermore, as previously explained, the closed-top nature of the central region of the reference supporting the central seven pins does not represent an unrestricted tapered entry as required in (a) of claim 1.

Thus, the reference does not disclose all the elements or limitations of claim 1 and therefore cannot be said to anticipate that claim. In addition, it is believed that a clear inventive step is involved in the design of the extrusion die of the present invention and it is believed that all of the present claims distinguish over the references known to the applicants,

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taken either singularly or in combination.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his position, withdraw the present rejection and allow all of the claims.

Should minor issues remain which, in the opinion of the Examiner, could be resolved by telephone interview, he is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at his convenience to discuss same in an effort to expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Amendment submitted in response to the final Official Action dated September 8, 2006 and Transmittal Letter in application Serial No. 10/698,091, filed on October 31, 2003, of William J. Worrell, Jr., et al, entitled "PROPELLANT EXTRUSION DIE" are being sent by facsimile transmission to: The Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on November 16, 2006.

April C. Nelson
on behalf of C. G. Mersereau
Attorney for Applicant

Date of Signature: November 16, 2006

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